

CCM 1RC

Statement by Sweden

Agenda item 8. General exchange of views.

Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and all those involved in the preparation of this first review conference for the excellent arrangements and great hospitality shown. Let me congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election and assure you of our full support. I would also like to extend our thanks to the interim ISU for all your excellent work in preparation of this Conference and many meetings before this, and to welcome the new permanent ISU, including its new Director Ms. Sheila Mweemba and wish you every success in the coming years.

Mr. President,

Sweden stands fully by the statement to be given by the European Union and would like to give some brief additional comments from a national perspective.

My country has taken an active part in the work of the Convention leading up to this review conference as one of the States signing the Convention on Cluster Munitions when it was first opened. We fully share the goals of the Convention banning this inhumane weapon, including the complete ban on its use. For the ban to become effective, it is important that also the world's largest manufacturers and users of cluster munitions join the Convention. This remains the biggest challenge for this Convention and we all need to contribute to its further universalization.

Like others, we are deeply concerned about recent reports on the use of cluster munitions in different parts of the world. Sweden joins those expressing deep concern about reports of the use of cluster munitions affecting civilian populations. Our Foreign Minister recently stated that such use of cluster munitions is unacceptable, and called on all actors to strictly observe International Humanitarian Law.

Mr. President,

Before the Convention on Cluster Munitions entered into force for Sweden on 1 October 2012, Sweden possessed a total of 370 BK M90 Cluster Munitions before the process of destruction started, containing a total of 20 595 explosive submunitions. Following accession and the entering into force of the CCM for Sweden, our obligation according to the Convention would be to finalise the destruction process by 1 October 2020.

In our transparency report in April this year we were glad to be able to note that dismantling of the BK M90 Cluster Munition and destruction of the containers had been completed. I am now pleased to announce that also the destruction of the explosive submunitions has been completed and the total destruction thereby accomplished, five years ahead of the deadline given by the Convention.

125 explosive submunitions – but no containers - will be retained. These retained submunitions will be used for training personnel in destruction techniques on live ammunition, as it is crucial for such training to include the handling of live explosives.

Mr. President,

Gender issues are high on the agenda of my government. Sweden is an active cosponsor of UNGA Resolution (69/61) on Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, introduced by Trinidad and Tobago. The resolution, inter alia, urges Member States to promote equal opportunities for the representation of women in all decision-making processes with regard to matters related to disarmament. It calls upon all States to empower women to participate in the design and implementation of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts. In the context of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, gender is an important aspect not least with regard to development cooperation incl. for mine action. Sweden pursues an active and ambitious feminist policy with a focus on rights, resources and representation. Our goal should be to link our work in mine action to the broad agenda of women, peace and security and UNSC resolution 1325.

All in all, Sweden has contributed over 100 million EUR to mine action worldwide over the last decade. Our support, administered mainly by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), has gone to mine action in its wider sense - to clear all Explosive Remnants of War, including cluster munitions. Among these activities, Sweden engaged in a number of projects which include actions specifically targeted on cluster munitions. One of them is the global support to UNICEF for its "Programme against Armed Violence". Other projects include our support to activities in Afghanistan and Iraq, through the Danish Demining Group, and also with MAG in Iraq. In 2013, Sweden made a contribution to the on-going work of Norwegian People's Aid on demining in Cambodia with special focus on cluster munitions. These activities continue also this year and will be extended to pilot work in Lao PDR and Vietnam.

In line with principles raised in international aid effectiveness processes, Sweden believes that the national ownership and the political will of the cooperation partner countries is key to achieving sustainable development. In our view, cooperation on mine action needs to be fully integrated into the development dialogue. This is the way to tackle remaining challenges such as uncleared land and assistance to survivors. This is also a way for mine action to regain momentum, to ensure that necessary resources can be mobilized.

It is gratifying to see that the rights perspective increasingly is becoming an integral part of the mine or cluster munitions survivor agenda. The Convention of the Rights of persons with disabilities has played a key role in fostering this perspective which emphasizes a person with disabilities as a subject which has rights, instead of the out-dated perspective of a disabled person as an object which should be taken care of by benign benefactors. A rights perspective has been instrumental in moving the accessibility agenda forward in many countries worldwide.

Sweden doesn't distinguish between the development aid that we provide to mine or cluster munitions survivors in accordance with the Conventions we are party to, and the support we provide to the health care sector as a whole in mine affected countries. Swedish support to sustainable health care, infrastructure and personnel, and to medical education, training and services in such countries, and as part of their own development strategies, exceeded altogether 100 million EUR over a recent five-year period.

Mr. President,

Sweden has, in its earlier role as co-coordinator for cooperation and assistance, participated in developing ideas for how the Convention can facilitate the connection of needs with resources. One such idea is the proposed establishment of an online Cooperation Portal for the Convention's website.

We have ourselves submitted information on available resources and relevant contact information for assistance projects to the trial version of this Portal, and we encourage also other States Parties and Signatories to do so.

Mr. President,

A Review Conference is a time to take stock of where we stand as States parties, and where we have to go in order to meet the objectives set out for us in the Convention. The proposals that you have made, Mr. President, about the coming review cycle - the important goals set out in the Dubrovnik Action Plan and the proposals for fine-tuning of the machinery - are key to the continued and future implementation of the Convention and will give valuable contributions to the spirit of cooperation upon which the Convention's work is based.

We are pleased to see that these proposals are being met with strong support.

To conclude, I would like to assure you, Mr. President, as well as all States Parties and partners in the UN system and in civil society, of our continued support for this Convention and for its implementation.

Thank you, Mr. President, for your attention.